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A Second Internet Site is Ordered to Cease Hate Messages

Ottawa – August 21, 2002 – The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal yesterday ordered John Micka, Machiavelli and Associates Emprize Inc., Joanne Vestvik and Ken Fast to immediately cease communicating hate messages on a particular Internet Web site. This is the second ruling by a tribunal this year involving a hate site on the Internet. A similar order was handed down to Ernst Zundel in January.

Mark Schnell filed complaints with the Canadian Human Rights Commission in 1999 and 2000, claiming that John Micka and Machiavelli and Associates Emprize Inc. discriminated against him. He felt the site communicated messages likely to expose persons to hatred and contempt based on their sexual orientation. Mr. Schnell alleged that the comments on the site were offensive and derogatory, and that these messages implied that homosexuals are paedophiles.

In reaching his finding, Tribunal Chair Grant Sinclair emphasized that, "If the telephone is ideally suited to spread prejudicial ideas, the Internet is even better positioned. It is a very public form of communication, inexpensive, easily accessed, and can communicate many messages simultaneously to a world-wide audience."

Mary Gusella, newly appointed Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, echoed the Tribunal's concerns. She said that the Commission had a message for operators of hate Web sites. "Spreading hate is against the law in this country and will not be tolerated," stressed the Chief Commissioner, "and we will continue to serve the interests of Canadians by ensuring that meritorious complaints are reviewed by the Tribunal."

Complaints against Ernst Zundel were filed with the Commission in 1996, alleging that the material on his Web site could expose Jews to hatred or contempt.

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